

Notices

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This section of the FEDERAL REGISTER contains documents other than rules or proposed rules that are applicable to the public. Notices of hearings and investigations, committee meetings, agency decisions and rulings, delegations of authority, filing of petitions and applications and agency statements of organization and functions are examples of documents appearing in this section.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Rural Housing Service

Rural Business-Cooperative Service

Rural Utilities Service

Farm Service Agency

Notice of Request for Extension of a Currently Approved Information Collection

AGENCIES: Rural Housing Service (RHS), Rural Utilities Service (RUS), Rural Business-Cooperative Service (RBS), and Farm Service Agency (FSA), USDA.
ACTION: Proposed collection; comments requested.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, this notice announces the intention of the above-named Agencies to request an extension for the currently approved information collection in support of the servicing of Community and Direct Business Programs Loans and Grants.

DATES: Comments on this notice must be received by March 17, 2003 to be assured of consideration.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For inquiries on the Information Collection Package, contact Cheryl Thompson, Regulations and Paperwork Management Branch, at (202) 692-0043. For program content, contact Beth Jones, Senior Loan Specialist, Community Programs Servicing and Special Authorities Branch, RHS, USDA, 1400 Independence Ave., SW., Mail Stop 0787, Washington, DC 20250-0787, Telephone (202) 720-1498, E-mail epjones@rdmail.rural.usda.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Title: 7 CFR 1951-E, Servicing of Community and Direct Business Programs Loans and Grants.

OMB Number: 0575-0066.

Expiration Date of Approval: April 30, 2003.

Type of Request: Extension of a currently approved information collection.

Abstract: The following Community and Direct Business Programs Loans and Grants are serviced by this currently approved docket (0575-0066): The Community Facilities loan and grant program is authorized by Section 306 of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1926) to make loans to public entities, nonprofit corporations, and Indian tribes through the Community Facilities program for the development of essential community facilities primarily serving rural residents. The Economic Opportunity Act of 1964, Title 3 (Pub. L. 88-452), authorizes Economic Cooperative Loans to assist incorporated and unincorporated associations to provide to low-income rural families essential processing, purchasing, or marketing services, supplies, or facilities.

The Food Security Act of 1985, section 1323 (Pub. L. 99-198), authorizes loan guarantees and grants to Nonprofit National Corporations to provide technical and financial assistance to for-profit or nonprofit local businesses in rural areas.

The Water and Waste Disposal program is authorized by section 306(a) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1926(a)) to provide basic human amenities, alleviate health hazards, and promote the orderly growth of the rural areas of the Nation by meeting the need for new and improved water and waste disposal systems.

The Business and Industry program is authorized by section 310 B (7 U.S.C. 1932) (Pub. L. 92-419, August 30, 1972) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act to improve, develop, or finance business, industry, and employment and improve the economic and environmental climate in rural communities, including pollution abatement control.

The Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act, section 310 B(c) (7 U.S.C. 1932(c)), authorizes Rural Business Enterprise Grants to public bodies and nonprofit corporations to facilitate the development of private businesses in rural areas.

The Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act, section 310 B(f)(i) (7 U.S.C. 1932(c)), authorizes Rural

Cooperative Development Grants to nonprofit institutions for the purpose of enabling such institutions to establish and operate centers for rural cooperative development.

The FSA is authorized by 25 U.S.C. 488-494 to make loans through its Indian Tribal Land Acquisition loan program to individuals, tribes, or tribal corporations, within tribal reservations and Alaskan communities. The authority for FSA to make loans for grazing, irrigation and drainage, and farm ownership recreation loans is provided by the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (CONACT) (7 U.S.C. 1926 330-381).

The purpose of the loan and grant servicing function for the above programs is to assist recipients to meet the objectives of the loans and grants, repay loans on schedule, comply with agreements, and protect the Government's financial interest. Routine servicing responsibilities include collection of payments, compliance reviews, security inspections, review of financial reports, determining applicant/borrower eligibility and project feasibility for various servicing actions, and supervision activities.

Supervision by the Agencies include, but is not limited to: Review of budgets, management reports, audits and financial statements; performing security inspections and providing, arranging, or recommending technical assistance; evaluating environmental impacts of proposed actions by the borrower; and performing civil rights compliance reviews.

Information will be collected by the field offices from applicants, borrowers, consultants, lenders, and attorneys.

Failure to collect information could result in improper servicing of these loans.

Estimate of Burden: Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response.

Respondents: State, local or tribal Governments, Not-for-profit institutions, businesses, and individuals.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 275.

Estimated Number of Responses per Respondent: 2.

Estimated Number of Responses: 421.

Estimated Total Annual Burden on Respondents: 465.

Copies of the information collection can be obtained from Cheryl Thompson,